

HOWARD DEAN



BIOGRAPHY

Howard Dean was born November 17, 1948 in Burlington, Vermont. He received his bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1971 and his medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City in 1978, and before entering politics, he shared a medical practice with his wife, Dr. Judy Steinberg. From 1982 to 1986, he served in the Vermont House of Representatives. In 1986, he was elected Vermont's lieutenant governor and became governor in 1991 after the death of Governor Richard Snelling. He went on to serve for 11 years. He and his wife have two children.

OVERVIEW

As governor of Vermont, Dean established some significant environmental credentials—protecting hundreds of thousands of acres of land and adopting a model energy efficiency program that has cut greenhouse gas emissions by one million tons. On the debit side, some Vermont environmentalists criticized Dean for his enforcement record on some clean water issues and for cutting funding to the state's environmental agencies. However, since entering the presidential race, Dean has made a point of staking out strong pro-environment positions and his campaign produced one of the strongest and most detailed LCV presidential candidate questionnaires we received. On the campaign trail, he has spoken out in favor of strong clean air and clean water standards, protection of public lands and wilderness, and he has promoted energy efficiency and renewable energy as key to U.S. energy independence. While he has been critical of the Kyoto global warming treaty, he favors mandatory caps for carbon emissions. Dean attended LCV's June 2003 presidential environmental debate.

ISSUE AREAS

Howard Dean's campaign returned LCV's presidential environmental questionnaire; excerpts from his questionnaire are included throughout this profile.

► CLEAN AIR

As part of his presidential platform, Governor Dean has said he would urge the quick adoption of "health-based standards for air toxins" and would "crack down" on corporate polluters:

Too many cities have smog so thick that some days children have to go indoors for a breath of fresh air. To help clear the air, as President, I would direct that adoption of health-based standards for air toxins be accelerated. Further, I would immediately crack down on those companies that violate New Source Review requirements—rather than broaden the

loophole that allows them to spew pollution as President Bush has done as a favor to his big campaign contributors in the energy industry. And I will ask Congress to close the loophole entirely. As a doctor, I believe clean air, clean land, and clean water are the right of all Americans. It could be considered part of my health care plan.¹

Dean has argued for strengthening existing clean air standards. He supports a plan sponsored by Senator Jim Jeffords (I-VT) to clean up Midwestern coal-fired power plants, and testified in support of the Jeffords bill in 2001.² "Given that the Northeast is downwind from the rest of the nation," Dean said, "pollutants from many of our nation's most industrialized regions find their way to our corner of the country. Therefore, effective national legislation is essential to adequately protect the health of citizens and our environment."³ In

THE CANDIDATE IN HIS OWN WORDS

My environmental agenda includes four touch stones: Establishing an environmentally sound energy policy; promoting livable communities; putting the “protection” back in environmental protection; and restoring America’s leadership on environmental issues.

An environmentally sound energy plan includes an ambitious commitment to efficiency and renewables. Efficiency works. Under my leadership in Vermont, we established Efficiency Vermont, the nation’s first state-wide energy efficiency utility which is on track to meet 10% of Vermont’s electricity needs in eight years. By matching that nationally we’ll need 200 fewer new power plants over the next decade. I’ll work to close the SUV loophole and increase fuel economy. And I support requiring that 20% of our electricity come from renewables by 2020.

I’ll promote livable communities by encouraging development in our urban areas, relieving pressure on remaining open space. New federal buildings such as courthouses and post offices can anchor development in downtowns. Washington can be a better partner to state and local governments. With a small investment, the federal government could help states update antiquated planning statutes. And we’ll clean up more Superfund and Brownfields sites faster.

To put the protection back into environmental protection, EPA will have the resources to put the environmental cop back on the beat. Environmental laws will be vigorously and fairly enforced. Those who comply will no longer be disadvantaged to those who don’t. I’ll work to reinstate the roadless rule as established under President Clinton and take other actions to keep our remaining wild lands wild.

I’ll reestablish the United States’ role as a world leader on environmental issues, reengaging the international community to address the global warming crisis and working toward a version of the Kyoto Protocol that we can adopt. It is our moral obligation to do so.

— Howard Dean, responding to League of Conservation Voters’ questionnaire

1998, Dean joined other New England governors and eastern Canadian leaders in calling for a 50 percent reduction in mercury emissions by 2003—coal burning-power plants are the single largest source of mercury pollution.⁴ However, in March 2001, Dean came under fire from environmental groups in the Vermont for suggesting that the state should build a coal-fired power plant to meet its growing energy needs. When asked later about his comments, Dean explained his statement on coal was “a throwaway. All I was trying to do was provoke debate,” but added, “I think coal’s definitely on the table if you can find the technology to make it clean enough.”⁵

During his presidential run, Governor Dean has harshly criticized the Bush administration’s “Clear Skies” proposal for power plant emissions as “a step in the wrong direction.”⁶ Environmentalists maintain

that “Clear Skies” would allow power plants to emit more pollutants than current clean air laws. Dean also opposes the Bush administration’s efforts to weaken “new source review” provisions of the Clean Air Act, which require that older plants, exempted from the original act in 1973, install pollution control equipment when expanding or upgrading their operations. In 1999, he joined other New England states in filing suit against Midwestern coal-fired power plants for failing to install cleaner technologies as required by the new source review provisions.⁷ According to Mary Sullivan, a former Vermont state representative, Dean was instrumental in pushing for the state to join the lawsuit.⁸ In his LCV questionnaire, Dean pledged to “vigorously enforce” the new source review provisions if elected president.⁹

► CLEAN WATER

Governor Dean supported reauthorization of the Clean Water Act as well as a National Governors Association (NGA) proposal to give states “adequate flexibility, funding, and time to address impaired waters.” He has also endorsed an NGA proposal for “an increased focus on watershed management planning, including funding for the State Revolving Loan Fund and non-point source pollution programs.”¹⁰ As governor, Dean issued a plan to clean up 26 of Vermont’s most polluted waterways by 2004. In his final year in office, he signed a bill regulating the flow of storm-water pollution into Vermont’s lakes and rivers that earned the support of business interests and some of the state’s environmental groups.¹¹

His overall record on clean water, however, was mixed. On the one hand, he led the state’s opposition to water pollution from an International Paper mill located on the opposite side of Lake Champlain in New York.¹² In addition, Dean formed a pollution control team in 1992 to reduce agriculture non-point pollution. According to Dean’s Web site, the state “spent \$4.8 million to help farmers construct 1232 waste management projects on 517 Vermont farms helping eliminate over 18,000 lbs of phosphorous from Vermont waterways.”¹³ On the other hand, he supported new rules making it easier for ski areas to take water for snowmaking from rivers and streams—a move that conservationists charged would drain water from some of Vermont’s most fragile environments and harm fish and wildlife.¹⁴

Governor Dean’s administration also weathered criticism for its handling of Vermont’s water pollution permits enforcement program. Roughly 126 of the state’s streams, lakes or sections of waterways are considered too polluted for fishing, swimming, or drinking.¹⁵ In 2002, budget cuts, staff shortages, and outdated databases left the state with more than 1,000 expired water pollution permits. Dean attempted to downplay the situation by stating that the streams “are not really polluted; in fact some of them you could drink out of and almost all of them you can swim in.”¹⁶

In response to LCV’s environmental questionnaire, Dean said that his approach to clean water issues would address the needs of states:

We must ... ensure that states have sufficient flexibility in adopting innovative solutions. It is important to emphasize that my call for flexibility is not a coded message veiling an attempt to weaken federal standards. On the contrary, my approach is to nurture collaborative action of the type I found to be most successful during my years as Governor. Indeed, a

strong watershed protection program should be developed in close consultation with state, local, and tribal governments but the federal government must provide oversight and enforce standards if we are to achieve real results in improving the health of our nation’s water.¹⁷

Dean also pledges to “modernize Clean Water Act protections to recognize that so-called ‘isolated wetlands’ play a vital ecosystem role” and opposes the Bush administration’s proposal to limit the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act.¹⁸ Environmentalists argue that this proposal would leave as many as 60 percent of the nation’s waterways without federal protection.

► TOXICS

In his LCV questionnaire, Dean pledged support for programs such as the Toxics Release Inventory that give the public information about toxics in their communities. He also indicated an interest in studying the federal adoption of a disclosure law for toxics in consumer products modeled on California’s proposition 65.¹⁹ In his final year as governor, Dean signed a resolution by the New England Governors’ Conference to eliminate mercury releases by 2003. The resolution also included a provision to encourage a working partnership between state governments, industries and the EPA to safely dispose of stockpiled and recovered mercury.²⁰

Superfund

Dean has argued for returning the financially strapped Superfund to a “polluter pays” system, rather than relying on taxpayer revenues to pay for cleanup costs.²¹ He has also suggested that EPA “reinvigorate its collaborative approaches to cleanups,” incorporating input from local governments, states, and tribes. In addition, he has pledged to “reinvigorate” the clean up of less contaminated Brownfields sites with increased funding and technical assistance to states and local governments.²²

► PUBLIC LANDS

Vermont environmentalists note that land conservation was a strong priority for Governor Dean and that the protection of thousands of acres of land was perhaps his administration’s greatest legacy.²³ Through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Dean’s administration protected nearly 74,000 acres of agricultural land and 220,000 acres of open

fields and forests. He also worked to purchase 130,000 acres in the Northeast Kingdom from Champion International Corporation.²⁴

Dean states that one of his “proudest accomplishments” as Governor was his record of land preservation and that he would continue to place a high priority on land conservation as president. “I believe that there are few things we in public office can leave to our children and their children that are more important than that. As President, I will instruct the people I appoint to office to maximize land protection and build on this legacy.”²⁵ In a major campaign speech on the environment in July 2003, Dean indicated that one of his four priorities if elected would be “promoting livable communities and preserving working landscapes and open spaces.”²⁶

National Forests

Dean supports the Clinton administration’s “roadless rule,” which would have banned new road building on 58.5 million acres of national forests. He is sharply critical of Bush administration policies, including efforts to log the Tongass National Forest in Alaska and restrict wilderness protection for Bureau of Land Management lands. He also slams the Bush administration’s “Healthy Forests” initiative, arguing instead for increasing Forest Service funding and “establishing Community Protection Zones that would treat 100-200 feet around fire-endangered homes and buildings and treat an area of 500 meters around communities.” And he pledges strong support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which provides funds to purchase land for federal and state parks.²⁷

Mining

Dean supports creating a royalty system for mining operations on federal lands, noting that many of the companies that operate on public lands pay no royalties for the billions of dollars of metals that they extract each year, while leaving taxpayers to clean up toxic mine sites.²⁸

National Parks

In response to an LCV question about restricting snowmobile, jetskis, and off-road vehicle use in national parks, Dean said that “rules and limitations ... should be made by Park Service professionals, not politicians or industry lobbyists. And such decisions should be based on sound science and public input, not political pressure.” Dean also endorses reducing the parks’ maintenance backlog and taking “immediate steps to limit pollution in our national parks.”²⁹

► ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT AND REGULATORY REFORM

Dean has decried the Bush administration practice of appointing former industry representatives to regulatory positions, and he has publicly called for the resignation of Deputy Interior Secretary J. Stephen Giles, who is under investigation for a potential ethics violation for meeting with clients of his old lobbying firm. As president, Dean vows, he would “ensure that the agencies created to oversee our precious environmental and natural resources aren’t co-opted by the very forces they’re supposed to be guarding against.”³⁰ Dean has also criticized the Bush administration for its failure to support scientific research. At LCV’s presidential environmental debate in June 2003, he argued that the President “is willing to discard science” and accused the administration of substituting “ideology for thought.”³¹ In addition, Dean has called for restoring funding for environmental enforcement. He also favors making EPA a Cabinet-level agency.³²

► ENERGY

Energy has emerged as one of the Dean campaign’s major themes and was a prominent feature of his July 2003 campaign speech on the environment.³³ On his campaign Web site, Dean is quoted as saying:

America is capable of making incredible gains in efficiency and renewable energy technologies. That’s why I will set ambitious goals for renewable energy, energy efficiency, and fuel economy standards....

I call on American automakers to embrace change, to see the new opportunities ahead, rather than waste time and energy resisting progress....

I believe that American automakers should not only catch up, they should become efficiency leaders—and market leaders. Under a Dean Administration, they will get the support they would need to make this a reality.³⁴

Nuclear Issues

Dean has supported the use of nuclear power and the continued operation of Vermont’s single nuclear power plant, which supplies a substantial portion of Vermont’s electricity. As governor, he also supported building the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada, a site opposed by environmentalists and Nevada elected officials. And he supported building a site in a low-income Hispanic community in Texas to house low-level nuclear waste site from Vermont and Maine.³⁵ However, he opposes the Bush

administration's proposed subsidies to allow the commercial nuclear industry to build new reactors and favors investment in safer, cleaner energy technologies over more investment in nuclear power.³⁶ In addition, in his presidential campaign Dean has questioned the science behind choosing Yucca Mountain as the nation's nuclear waste storage site, although he stopped short of opposing the site and still supports a central nuclear waste repository.³⁷

Fuel Economy/Energy Efficiency

Although he originally postponed its creation for several years due to concerns about high electricity costs in the state, Dean ultimately approved the establishment of Efficiency Vermont, a statewide utility charged with providing energy efficiency programs for Vermont businesses and citizens. In its first year, the program saved \$17 million on electric bills and cut demand by enough to power 3,000 homes.³⁸ To date, according to Dean, the program has averted 1 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions while generating \$66.8 million in energy savings.³⁹ The program is one of the environmental accomplishments in which Dean takes greatest pride.

Dean supports tougher corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards—40 miles per gallon by 2015—and stronger incentives for fuel-efficient vehicles.

My proposal is to make CAFE standards the same for SUVs as they are for the regular fleet. The technology to do that exists today. Ford will be coming out with a 35-mile-per-gallon, hybrid-engine SUV model this year. Lexus has one. People want SUVs and now they can get SUVs and trucks with good mileage standards. The CAFE standard would force a significant portion of the fleet to be hybrids in order to meet the average. I was one of four governors that had a standard requiring a certain percentage of cars sold in our state to be electric vehicles.⁴⁰

As governor, Dean was a staunch proponent of Vermont's adoption of clean car rules modeled after California regulations, which require automakers to sell zero emissions vehicles, and fought efforts in the legislature to roll back these higher standards.⁴¹ A plan developed in collaboration with Massachusetts and New York would have required zero emission vehicles to account for between 2 and 10 percent of all vehicles sold in each state by 2004. Dean rejected a later proposal offered by the other two states to push the deadline to 2007 and place more of an emphasis on hybrids and low-sulfur diesel for trucks. "Any delay is a setback,"

he said. "Our reading of this plan is that now the auto makers can get away from doing anything in advanced technology—battery electric vehicles, fuel cells, hybrids—until 2007" in New York and Massachusetts.⁴²

Oil Drilling

Dean opposes drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and supports designating the coastal plain of the refuge as a wilderness area. He also supports protecting fragile coastal areas from offshore oil and gas drilling.⁴³

Renewable Energy

In an interview with *Grist Magazine*, Dean declared his support for renewable energy sources:

I want renewables. Wind is here. The Europeans are far ahead of us. We've lost our technological edge. The federal government needs to get involved in a positive way [if U.S. energy companies want] to remain competitive in the global marketplace. Solar is here. We ought to be making more aggressive investments there. In Vermont, the standard I supported is that every additional megawatt we use from now until 2010 must be renewable. On a federal level, I would set a standard of 15 percent renewables by 2010 and 20 percent by 2020 or higher – maybe 25 percent. We can do that.⁴⁴

In his final State of the State address, Governor Dean proposed spending \$750,000 on renewable energy technologies and encouraging businesses to use alternative sources of power and promote energy efficiency. In testimony before the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Dean said that the funds "represent a step in a period of public support that is needed so the market for renewable resources can ultimately stand on its own."⁴⁵

Dean maintains that renewable (non-hydroelectric) energy sources should go from being less than 2 percent of the nation's energy supply to 15 percent. To achieve this increased capacity, Dean would rely on tax credits and direct federal aid to increase wind and solar energy outputs.⁴⁶

In a recent interview, Dean also argued on behalf of ethanol: "That's controversial in environmental circles because they don't like subsidies to Archer Daniels Midland, but the Brazilians have used 90 percent ethanol distilled from sugarcane and that does not have the high British-thermal-unit process that's required to make ethanol and it doesn't involve any subsidies. Ten percent of ethanol in everybody's gas tank does not require any mechanical change in

building cars, but it would save 2 percent of the entire world output of oil. Biodiesel is another alternative fuel I would support.”⁴⁷

► GLOBAL WARMING

While Dean has criticized the Bush administration’s “diplomatic petulance” in opposing the Kyoto protocol,⁴⁸ his own support for the Kyoto protocol has been somewhat qualified. At LCV’s presidential environmental debate in June 2003, he said that, instead of rejecting the Kyoto protocol on climate change, the U.S. should renegotiate it so that developing countries have more time to reduce greenhouse gases. “We need to find a way to sign the Kyoto protocol,” Dean said, “The biggest problem with the Kyoto protocol is that it doesn’t ask the developing nations to do anything. And that’s an enormous problem.”⁴⁹

Dean has been a strong supporter of mandatory caps on carbon dioxide and other global warming pollutants. For instance, he has endorsed a California policy requiring new vehicles to emit less carbon pollution.⁵⁰ And in 2002, as governor, he signed a directive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Vermont by 25 percent over the next decade. The directive ordered state agencies to purchase the most energy-efficient appliances, equipment, and vehicles available. The directive also required the state buildings department to buy renewable energy whenever possible and created incentives for state employees to find alternatives to driving to work alone.⁵¹

► WILDLIFE

Governor Dean has stated that he supports the goals of the Endangered Species Act, and he maintains that “we have a moral obligation to protect other species.”⁵² He has promised to increase funding for the Fish and Wildlife Service, enabling the agency to accelerate designations of critical habitat.⁵³ He opposes exempting the Defense Department from complying with the Endangered Species Act.⁵⁴

► INTERNATIONAL

In his response to LCV’s presidential questionnaire, Governor Dean expressed his strong support for U.S. participation in international efforts to protect the environment: “I will use the bully pulpit to show the American people that cooperation with the international community will allow us to address critical en-

vironmental issues now, before they create even more serious problems in the future.”⁵⁵

Population

Dean has expressed strong support for U.S. support of international family planning programs: “Expanding reproductive health options is essential to reducing pressure on the environment and improving the quality of life for people everywhere. I believe the U.S. needs to play a leadership role on population issues and step up to meet the commitments it has made to the international community.” He supports reinstating the U.S. contribution to the United Nations Population Fund “with appropriate safeguards.”⁵⁶

Trade

In a recent campaign speech, Dean said:

The U.S. must pursue an environmental agenda as an essential element of international trade agreements. In the future, all of our trade agreements should have strong and enforceable environmental protections built in. And, where possible, I will work as well to reform anti-environmental provisions in existing treaties.⁵⁷

Dean has also vowed to “defend vigorously U.S. trade and public health laws when they are challenged in WTO [World Trade Organization] dispute resolution actions” and to “actively consult with the public health and environment community” in response to any WTO challenge.⁵⁸

► RECORD ON STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Environmental leaders in Vermont generally give Dean good marks for the quality of his appointments to the state’s environmental agencies while governor. Environmental leaders also praise his record on land conservation, noting that Dean has a “passion” for this issue and that the Champion forest land purchase in northeast Vermont, in particular, required him to take on powerful interests, including hunting and fishing advocates and the timber industry.⁵⁹

Dean’s medical background makes him particularly committed to issues that affect the public’s health, such as reducing air pollution and mercury contamination. During his tenure in office, he exhibited strong leadership on both these issues within the state and throughout the New England region. Dean also instituted a number of reforms in transportation planning that received praise from state environmen-

tal groups.⁶⁰ To help promote “livable communities,” he has pledged to make the federal government a “better partner to state and local governments” by providing help to update planning laws and promoting the cleanup of brownfields.⁶¹

Governor Dean’s emphasis on balancing Vermont’s budget also led to cuts at state environmental agencies—and to a backlog of expired water permits. Environmental leaders in the state also note that Dean’s record as governor was, in general, much more moderate than his presidential campaign coverage would indicate—and that the positions he is taking in his campaign are more progressive than those he espoused as governor.⁶²

ENDNOTES

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